

**Alexandra Park & Palace Informal Joint Meeting of the
Advisory Committee and Consultative Committee
Alexandra Park & Palace Statutory Advisory Committee** on 17th July 2012

Report Title: **Park Activities Update**

Report of: **Mark Evison, Park Manager, Alexandra Palace Charitable Trust**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To update the committee regarding various activities including the site visit to discuss the cricket ground improvement project.
- 1.2 To seek the committee's advice on the proposals for Dog Control Orders and request the committee responds to the London Borough of Haringey accordingly.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the success of the Red Bull BMX event in the Park and that the restoration work is progressing well and also notes the completed repair works along Alexandra Palace Way.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the updated proposal for a water storage tank at the Cricket Club and provides the Board with advice.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers the proposals for Dog Control Orders in the Park and responds directly to the council through the Chair and also responds with the feedback from their own organisation's membership.

Report Authorised by: **Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive** 

Contact Officer: **Mark Evison, Park Manager, Alexandra Palace & Park,
Alexandra Palace Way, Wood Green N22 7AY Tel No. 020 8365 2121**

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The programme of work to restore the grounds following the Red Bull BMX event is underway at the time of writing, a verbal update will be provided at the meeting.
- 3.2 The proposal for a water storage tank at the cricket ground was discussed at a site visit and has been revised. Board approval and planning permission and will be sought over the next few weeks.
- 3.3 The London Borough of Haringey is consulting on Dog Control Orders and the details proposed by the Park Manager are laid out in the report for consideration. Board also RESOLVED that the Members of the Advisory and Consultative Committees be requested to consider these proposals and respond directly to the council through their Chair and also through their own organisation's membership.

4. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

4.1 N/A

5. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

5.1 N/A

6. Red Bull BMX Event

- 6.1 The South Front hosted the very successful Red Bull BMX event in May. The event was successful and around 19,000 people attended over two days with many more watching from outside the fence-line. It was a family orientated event that appealed to a new demographic for the Palace.
- 6.2 As expected the grass under the dirt-track died. Although there are a number of other areas of damage, such as rutted grass, the construction team kept the impact to a minimum despite the appalling weather conditions throughout April.
- 6.3 A programme of restoration by our grounds contractor, John O'Conner GM Ltd, commenced in June. This work involves using a low-fertility soil to back fill the depressions and re-seeding with acid-loving grass species based on the ecologist's recommendations. A verbal update on progress will be made at the meeting.

7. Improvements to Cricket Grounds

- 7.1 Following the last meeting of this committee a site visit took place on 22nd June with Sam Davidson from *Building Schools for the Future* (BSF) and representatives from the Alexandra Park Club.
- 7.2 The discussions resulted in three options being further considered by officers from BSF. The options and the outcomes are explained below:
- Use the Thames Water reservoirs as an irrigation supply. This option is not viable within the required timescales. A multi-party legal agreement would be required and this alone could take many months to complete.
 - Bury the irrigation tank below ground level. This option will increase capital costs. An underground tank will also have increased maintenance costs that the Club will be required to meet in perpetuity. New funding may be available via planning gain (section 106), but this is uncertain at the time of writing.
 - Locate the tank to the north-west of the club house in the scrub area adjacent to the car park. The site will have to be carefully chosen to avoid it affecting future plans for improving the facilities. The increased distance will add some extra costs to the installation.
- 7.3 This matter will be discussed by the Alexandra Palace and Park Board on 24th July. Following this, a planning application will be made by BSF. A final decision by the Board is essential for the future of the project, so advice should be agreed by this Committee at the meeting, this is last opportunity for the committee to feed in to the project before the planning application is made.

8. Dog Control Orders

- 8.1 Haringey Council is consulting on Dog Control Orders in response to residents, Friends of Parks, Police and dog walkers who have told the council they are concerned about the growing number of dogs causing problems in public places. The perceived problems involve dogs fouling, being out of control or off-the-lead and causing a nuisance. One solution is to introduce Dog Control Orders, and proposals have been made following an informal consultation exercise. More details and an online survey can be found on the council's website:
- <http://www.haringey.gov.uk/dogcontrol#maps>
- 8.2 The consultation notice explains that "for the past two years the council has worked with the RSPCA, Battersea Dogs Home, Wood Green Animal Shelter, Police, Homes for Haringey, Friends of Parks and residents to promote responsible dog ownership. Most dog owners in the borough behave responsibly but there are those who don't."
- 8.3 These proposals involve designating parks, or part of them, as areas where dogs can be either walked freely without a lead, excluded, walked with a lead or placed on a lead when instructed. A borough-wide order making it an offence to fail to clean up after your dog is also proposed. Appendix 1 is a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) which sets out the council's position for the borough in general.
- 8.4 The Head of Legal Services has confirmed that the council, as a "primary authority" - within the meaning of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 - has a discretion to make dog control orders, and that such orders can be made in relation to Alexandra Palace and Park, being "land which is open to the air and to which the public are entitled or permitted to have access (with or without payment)".
- 8.5 If so, initial costs would be incurred to erect new signs, these costs will be met within the existing Park budget.
- 8.6 Table 1.1 overleaf and the plan attached as Appendix 2 show how the Park Manager proposes the Dog Control Orders be applied to Alexandra Park. The areas marked are believed to offer the best compromise between dog walkers and other Park users. This proposal was informed by the Park Manager's own experience, reports from the Park maintenance team and nine respondents to an article placed on the website of the Friends of Alexandra Park.
- 8.7 The basic principles applied are:
- That dogs be excluded from service yards. This is for the safety of the dogs and their owners.
 - That dogs be excluded from children's facilities, animal enclosures and sporting areas, this is for the safety of the children, and animals and to prevent fouling and disruption of sporting areas. Most of these areas are already fenced off.
 - That dogs be walked on the lead in the Grove, on the Terrace and around the boating lake and children's play area, this acknowledges that families should be able to visit certain areas of the park safe in the knowledge that dogs will not be running loose. These areas amount to about 10 hectares of the 79 hectare site (approximately 12.5%).
 - That failing to clean up after your dog anywhere in site becomes an offence.
 - That dogs must be placed on a lead anywhere on the site when instructed.

- 8.8 The council is asking:
- Are we choosing the right kind of restrictions for certain parks and open spaces?
 - Are we being fair to all those responsible dog owners who need somewhere to exercise their dogs?
 - Will these restrictions improve the experience of going out to the park for most people or are they too restrictive?
- 8.9 The Board considered this matter at its meeting on 7th June and authorised Officers to respond formally to the council on this basis. The consultation ends on 23rd July.
- 8.10 The Board also resolved that the Members of the Advisory and Consultative Committees be requested to consider these proposals and respond directly to the council through their Chair and also through their own organisation's membership. The Trust Solicitor has advised that this matter is clearly within the Advisory Committee's remit.
- 8.11 Enforcement of the Orders could be carried out by the Borough's Enforcement Officers and it is hoped that the Palace's security staff could also be given the power to issue fixed penalty notices.

Table 1.1

DESCRIPTION	NO DOGS hatched red	DOGS ON LEADS shaded blue	SITE AREA
Whole of Park incl Palace			78.7ha (100%)
NO DOGS			
Islands - 345 preschool	0.12		
Actual Workshop - Little Dinosaurs	0.20		
The Grove Café	0.03		
Park Yard	0.24		
North Service Yard	0.44		
Play area	0.38		
Skate park	0.04		
Deer enclosures	1.54		
Pitch & Putt	3.33		
Cricket Ground	5.78		
Conservation Pond	0.15		
Redston Pond	0.09		
TOTAL	12.35 (15.7%)		
DOGS ON LEADS			
The Grove		4.92	
Terrace		1.02	
Boating Lake		1.54	
TOTAL		7.48 (9.5%)	
FOR INFORMATION			
Palace & North Service Yard combined			4.70
The Grove (total)			5.52
Boating lake + skate park + play area			3.25
TOTAL			13.47 (17.1%)

9. Infrastructure repairs

9.1 The repair works on Alexandra Palace Way are almost complete. The main carriageway resurfacing was completed ahead of schedule on 1st June. Minor repairs to the pavement and footway continue at the time of writing in early July. A verbal update will be made at the meeting if required.

10. Park Entrances

10.1 Following vandalism and anti-social behaviour, a proposal for overnight closure of two Park entrances will be presented to the Board on 24th July. The two entrances are the Park Avenue North gate into Reston Field and the Muswell Hill pedestrian entrance into the Grove.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1 That the Committee notes the success of the Red Bull BMX event in the Park and that the restoration work is progressing well and also notes the completed repair works along Alexandra Palace Way.
- 11.2 That the Committee considers the updated proposal for a water storage tank at the Cricket Club and provides the Board with advice.
- 11.3 That the Committee considers the proposals for Dog Control orders in the Park and responds directly to the council through the Chair and also responds with the feedback from their own organisation's membership.

12. Legal Implications

12.1 The Council's Head of Legal Services comments are set out at paragraph 8.4 of the report.

13. Financial Implications

13.1 The LBH Chief Financial Officer notes the contents of the report.

14. Use of Appendices/Tables/Photographs

- 14.1 Dog Control Orders: FAQs
- 14.2 Dog Control Orders: Park Plan